



WHRN WORKSHOP

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- Children's & Women's Health Centre of British Columbia
- Simon Fraser University – Harbour Centre
- University of British Columbia
- University of British Columbia – Okanagan
- University of Northern British Columbia
- University of Victoria



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Health Determinants and Women's Health

University of Victoria
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Introduction

- Examination of health determinants helps us to better understand inequalities in health outcomes
- Incorporates a range of social, economic, environmental, and health service factors that interact in complex ways to positively or negatively influence health
- Including gender as a health determinant represents a new and vital direction for research and policy



Health Determinants include

a. Individual level determinants

- Biology and genetic endowment
- Income and wealth
- Education and literacy
- Race & ethnicity
- Age
- Gender



Health Determinants (con't.)

b. Meso/context level determinants

- Family context
- Work context
- Neighbourhood/community

c. Macro level determinants

- Physical environment
- Health and social services system
- Socio-political structure



Health Determinants Approach

- Shed light on the ways in which health is determined by biological factors, by social factors or the interaction between the two
- Recognizes the diversity of population groups and the individual agency
- Understands the importance of the relationship between power, access to resources, discourses of inclusion and exclusion, and health inequalities



Gender as a Health Determinant

- Acknowledges fundamental connections between sex, gender and the interaction between the two
- Recognizes the importance of differences between women, men and other gender groups, as well as differences between and within groups of women based on social factors, identity statuses, geographical locations and access to key material and ideological resources
- Women's multiple roles and unequal access to power are two of the reasons that gender is a vital determinant for research and policy implications



Threats to Action

Political & economic environment:

- Increasing inequality between social classes
- Cutbacks to outreach programs and social services
- Privatization of some key services

Some consequences:

- Social exclusion of vulnerable populations
- Societal discourse that discriminates & stigmatizes



Threats to Action (con't)

Some strategies:

- Articulate a broader definition of health and health care that includes causes for health disparities
- Challenge current power structures to reduce poverty and eliminate discrimination & stigma
- Raise specific concerns for the health of women



Directions for future research

- The complexity and adaptable nature of relationships between biological and social determinants means that research must be ongoing, thorough, and responsive to changes in:
 - Economy and polity
 - Demographic shift
 - Technology
 - Health & social system
 - Civil society
- Need to question how health is measured
- Vital to acknowledge gender in our analyses



Appendices (in progress)

- Research projects completed or underway on BC women's health determinants
- Peer-review publications, government reports and other relevant documents on women's health determinants by BC researchers.



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